

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims are 2-14. Claim 13 has been amended to improve its form, and new claim 14 has been added similar to claim 13 but specifying that the wire buffer storage is formed from a wire core or a guide hose, which was previously recited in claim 13. In addition, claims 4, 7 and 8, which previously depended on claim 13, have been amended to depend on new claim 14, and claims 9 and 10 have been amended to improve their form. Reconsideration is expressly requested.

Claims 2-13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for the reasons set forth on page 2 of the Office Action. Specifically, the Examiner objected to the language in claim 13 specifying in paragraph (d) that the wire buffer storage contains an amount of welding wire and is "formed from a member selected from the group consisting of the welding wire, a wire core, and a guide hose" which means that the wire buffer storage is distinct from the welding wire and therefore claim 13 was said to be unclear how the wire buffer storage can be formed from a member that is "the welding wire" as set forth in the claims.

In response, Applicants have amended claim 13 to specify that the wire buffer storage contains an amount of welding wire rather than being formed from a welding wire and have added new claim 14 specifying that the wire buffer storage contains an amount of welding wire and is formed from a member selected from the group consisting of a wire core and a guide hose, which it is respectfully submitted overcomes the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

The Examiner has also indicated that if claim 13 were suitably amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, while maintaining the same general scope of the claim, claim 13 would be deemed to distinguish over the prior art of record because of the limitation as set forth in paragraph (d) describing the wire buffer storage formed from a member "following a curved course between the connection region and the drive unit," which has been interpreted by the Examiner that the member that forms the buffer storage always follows a curved course.

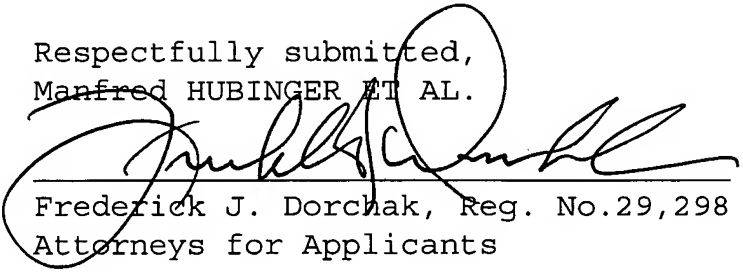
In response and in order to expedite prosecution of this case, Applicants have amended claim 13 and have added new claim 14 as discussed above to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C.

112. Claim 13 as amended specifies that the wire buffer storage contains an amount of welding wire following a curved course between the connection region and the drive unit and new claim 14 specifies that the wire buffer storage is formed from a member that follows a curved course between the connection region and the drive unit. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 13 and 14, together with claims 2-12, which depend directly or indirectly on either claim 13 or claim 14, are now in condition for allowance.

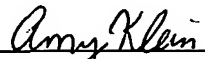
In summary, claims 4, 7-10 and 13 have been amended and new claim 14 has been added. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,
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